

CLAIMS:

1. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content to an audience at an exhibitor site, the method comprising:

- (a) assembling an electronic play list for the motion picture and for related promotional content, said play list identifying at least one time slot for presentation of promotional content;
- (b) posting an electronic notice soliciting a bid from an advertisement provider for purchase of said at least one time slot;
- (c) in response to a received bid, associating an advertisement from said advertisement provider with said at least one time slot in said play list; and
- (d) acquiring said advertisement electronically from said advertisement provider.

2. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 1 further comprising:

- (e) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibitor site; and
- (f) providing said audience metric electronically to said advertisement provider.

3. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 2 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric comprises the step of counting.

4. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 1 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list comprises the step of conforming to rules provided as metadata with the digital motion picture.

5. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 1 further comprising:

- (d) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibitor site; and

(e) inserting a new time slot into said electronic play list according to said audience metric.

6. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 5 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by an operator.

7. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 5 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by software.

8. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 1 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list is performed remotely from the exhibitor site.

9. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 2 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric is performed remotely from the exhibitor site.

10. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 2 further comprising the step of computing an advertising rate based on said audience metric.

11. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 1 wherein said motion picture is a digital motion picture.

12. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content to an audience at an exhibitor site, the method comprising:

(a) assembling an electronic play list for the motion picture and for related promotional content, said play list identifying at least one time slot for

presentation of promotional content, said play list set up according to instructions from a provider of motion picture image data;

- (b) associating an advertisement from an advertisement provider with said at least one time slot in said play list, according to said instructions; and
- (c) acquiring said advertisement electronically from said advertisement provider.

13. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 12 further comprising:

- (d) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibitor site; and
- (e) providing said audience metric electronically to said advertisement provider.

14. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 13 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric comprises the step of counting.

15. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 12 further comprising:

- (d) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibitor site; and
- (e) inserting a new time slot into said electronic play list according to said audience metric and in compliance with said instructions.

16. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 15 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by an operator.

17. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 15 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by software.

18. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 12 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list is performed remotely from the exhibitor site.

19. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 12 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric is performed remotely from the exhibitor site.

20. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 13 further comprising the step of computing an advertising rate based on said audience metric.

21. A method for scheduling motion picture and promotional content according to claim 12 wherein said motion picture is a digital motion picture.

22. A method for providing motion picture entertainment and advertising to an audience in an exhibition facility, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) assembling an electronic play list for scheduling a motion picture feature and at least one advertising presentation; and
- (b) downloading to the exhibition facility, at the time of showing, the motion picture feature from a first remote site and said at least one advertising presentation from a second remote site, according to said play list.

23. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 further comprising:

- (d) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibition facility; and
- (e) providing said audience metric to a networked advertisement provider.

24. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list further comprises identifying at least one time interval for a price bid.

25. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 23 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric comprises the step of counting.

26. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list comprises the step of conforming to rules provided with the digital motion picture.

27. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 further comprising:

- (d) obtaining an audience metric associated with said exhibition facility;
and,
- (e) inserting a new time slot into said electronic play list according to said audience metric.

28. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 27 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by an operator.

29. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 27 wherein the step of inserting a new time slot is performed by software.

30. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list comprises the step of informing advertisers of time slots in said play list.

31. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 30 wherein the step of informing advertisers comprises the step of sending an electronic message.

32. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 wherein the step of assembling an electronic play list is performed remotely from the exhibition facility.

33. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 23 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric is performed remotely from the exhibition facility.

34. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 23 further comprising the step of computing an advertising rate based on said audience metric.

35. A method for providing motion picture entertainment according to claim 22 wherein said motion picture is a digital motion picture.

36. A method for providing a showing of a motion picture feature and advertising to an audience at an exhibition site, the method comprising the steps of:

- (a) assembling an electronic play list for the showing, comprising a plurality of time slots for scheduling the motion picture feature and at least one advertising presentation;
- (b) downloading, from a first remote site to the exhibition site, the motion picture feature as digital image data for display within a first said time slot;
- (c) downloading, from said first remote site to the exhibition site, instructions regarding said at least one advertising presentation and verifying that said at least one advertising presentation conforms to said instructions; and

(d) downloading, from a second remote site to the exhibition site, said at least one advertising presentation, for display within a second said time slot, according to said play list.

37. A method for providing a showing according to claim 36 wherein the step of downloading said at least one advertising presentation is performed during the showing.

38. A method for providing a showing according to claim 36 further comprising:

- (a) obtaining an audience metric for the audience in attendance at the showing; and
- (b) communicating data about the audience to an advertiser.

39. A method for providing a showing according to claim 36 further comprising the step of computing an advertising rate based on data about the audience.

40. A method for providing a showing according to claim 38 wherein the step of obtaining an audience metric comprises the step of counting.

41. A method for providing a showing according to claim 36 wherein the motion picture is a digital motion picture.

42. A method for scheduling digital motion picture and promotional content for an audience at an exhibitor site, the method comprising:

- (a) assembling an electronic play list for the motion picture and for related promotional content, said play list identifying at least one time slot for presentation of the promotional content; and
- (b) adjusting said electronic play list prior to showing the digital motion picture, wherein the step of adjusting said electronic play list comprises the step of entering commands on a portable control device.

43. A method for scheduling digital motion picture and promotional content at an exhibitor site according to claim 42 wherein the step of entering commands on a portable control device comprises the step of entering a command on a PDA.

44. A method for scheduling digital motion picture and promotional content at an exhibitor site according to claim 42 wherein the step of adjusting said electronic play list is performed according to an audience metric.

45. A method for scheduling digital motion picture and promotional content at an exhibitor site according to claim 44 wherein said audience metric comprises information about delayed seating.

46. A method for scheduling digital motion picture and promotional content at an exhibitor site according to claim 42 wherein the step of adjusting said electronic play list comprises the step of reassigning the digital motion picture presentation to an alternate exhibition facility.

47. A scheduling controller for a digital motion picture exhibitor, comprising a portable electronic device for maintaining an electronic play list for scheduling a digital motion picture presentation and advertising content, the play list comprising at least a first time slot for assignment of the motion picture and a second time slot for assignment of an advertisement, said electronic device further comprising control logic for changing an assignment or time setting in said play list.